



FAMOUS GARDENS.—NO. 2.

THE reader of French history will not have forgotten the malicious reply of Louis XIV. to Fouquet, his *surintendant des finances*, whose disgrace the king had long ago determined on, when this minister received him so magnificently at Vaux: "I shall no longer dare to receive you." It will be remembered, also, that, on visiting Chantilly, Louis XIV. found the chateau and grounds so much to his taste, that he offered to purchase them of the Great Condé, at any price he might fix, a proposition Condé very politely refused to entertain. He was not more successful with the Duchess d'Aiguillon. This lady had received from Cardinal Richelieu, her uncle, the château de Rueil, a domain for which she had a peculiar affection, and had greatly improved. The gardens were cited as being the most beautiful in the whole *Ile-de-France*. Colbert was commissioned by the king to negotiate for its purchase. The reply of the duchess is worthy of preservation:

"The king is master," she wrote, "and he who gave me Rueil taught France so well the obedience due its sovereign, that his majesty cannot question mine."

The king had the good taste not to profit by this act of submission, and refused to accept the sacrifice. He left Rueil in the possession of Madame d'Aiguillon, as he had left Chantilly to his cousin Condé. Nevertheless, he did not think himself sufficiently well lodged in the five or six palaces he had received from his ancestors. He did not like Paris, and thought the Louvre odious. At Vincennes the air was wholesome enough, but it was the same the prisoners of state breathed. The apartments of Fontainebleau were not sufficiently spacious; besides, it was too far from the capital. From Saint-Germain he could see the spire of Saint-Denis, the sight of which produced on him, it is said, an effect similar to that of the funeral refrain of the Trappists: "We must die." In short, none of these princely residences pleased him; besides, was it unreasonable for the grand Louis to want an establishment cut to his measure, and made expressly for him? In order that this miracle should be the more

complete and wonderful; in order, it would seem, that he might prove that he could make Nature as well as mankind submissive even to his caprices, this imperious monarch chose the most rebellious and ungrateful location among the environs of Paris, where the ostentatious monument he projected would encounter the greatest difficulties and entail the greatest expenditure.

The choice of Versailles was justified, in a measure, at least, by the filial piety that seems at first to have influenced him. There was located the only habitation built by Louis XIII. for his own use. At first it was only a pavilion or summer-house, that served as a retreat after a day's hunting in the forests of Saint-Leger. Then, instead of a simple shelter, Louis XIII. wanted to have a habitable dwelling, and the architect Leclerc built for him, in 1627, a chateau protected by a moat and surrounded by a garden with two terraces, and flower-beds bordered by the arms of France, two little basins and an orangery, which was protected by the grand terrace, and located between the two flights of stairs that led to the parterre. This disposition was preserved by Mansard and Le Nôtre, who gave, however, to the orangery, the terrace, and stairs, much grander proportions, as we shall see directly.

Bassompierre found the chateau a sorry affair, of which, he said, a private gentleman could not be proud. But the king was not so fastidious. He was very well satisfied to have an asylum where he could escape temporarily from the tyranny of Richelieu, and be permitted to forget the affairs of state. Sometimes, even in the inclement season, he would spend weeks at Versailles, much against the wishes of some of the courtiers, whose positions rendered it their duty to keep him company. One tolerably severe winter day, Louis XIII. was taking the air on the grand terrace with the Duke de Gramont, when he asked the duke if he remembered that a wind-mill stood there but a short time before. "Yes, sire," replied the duke; "the mill no longer remains, but the wind is here still."

Versailles, at that time, was only a village. Louis XIV. wanted the chateau to become a vast palace, larger than the Louvre and Tuileries together; that the surrounding country should become an immense park, and the village a large city. His wish was realized, but at what a cost!

In 1661, the architect Levan began the structure, which was continued, after his death, by Mansard, who proposed to tear down the *Château de Cartes* (it was thus that the modest retreat of Louis XIII. was derisively called); but Louis XIV. objected, and the plans were accordingly drawn for the new structures at the right and left of this nucleus, which they were destined to completely overshadow by their extent and magnificence.

Le Nôtre had *carte blanche* in planning the gardens, and was at liberty to destroy that of Louis XIII., except the *Bosquet du Dauphin*, so called in memory of its having been made the year the queen, Anne of Austria, after remaining childless for twenty-two years, gave birth to the child who, within five years, became Louis XIV. This thicket and another, the companion to it, terminated the original garden where now the grand avenue, called the *Tapis Vert*, begins.

Le Nôtre, having fixed the details of his plans for transforming the woodland and swamp, that lay around the chateau, into the most beautiful pleasure-grounds he could imagine, begged the king to come and judge of the general arrangement. Taking an elevated position, he said: "Sire, in place of the two little terraces and the parterre, we will have, if it please your majesty, one vast terrace ornamented with two basins."

"Le Nôtre," said Louis, interrupting him, "I present you with 20,000 livres."

"From this terrace," resumed the artist, with a profound salutation, "will descend a double flight of steps to a broad avenue, which we will call the *Allée Royale*, and—"

"Le Nôtre," said Louis, again interrupting him, "I present you with 20,000 livres."

Le Nôtre made another salutation and continued: "Between

the two flights of stairs there will be a beautiful parterre, with a basin in the centre, ornamented with figures of gods, goddesses, nymphs, and sea-monsters, according to the taste of the sculptor, which will throw jets of water crossing one another."

"Le Nôtre," said the king, the third time, "I present you with 20,000 livres."

Third salutation, still more profound, of Le Nôtre, who continues:

"At the other extremity of the grand avenue, we will place another basin, as companion to this one, decorated in a similar manner. On each side of the two pieces of water, which will ornament the terrace, there will be two parterres; one on the south, terminating at the orangery; the other on the north, at the extremity of which there will be a large piece of water—"

Fourth interruption by the king:

"Le Nôtre, I present you with 20,000 livres."

"Sire," cried Le Nôtre, abruptly, "your majesty shall know no more; I should ruin you."

Le Nôtre had made a very good day of it; 80,000 livres, about \$16,000 of our money, in those days, was a very considerable sum—a little fortune indeed.

The work was immediately begun. The king visited Versailles almost daily. He had the vanity to think he knew quite as much about architecture as Mansard and Le Nôtre, if not more. If he did not, like the kalif Yusuf-Abu-al-Hadjedj, make the plans of his palaces and gardens himself, it was because the cares of state, the wars in which he was engaged, his numerous gallantries, and the formalities of court etiquette, which occupied the greater part of his time, did not leave him sufficient leisure. But nothing was done until he had examined it, and given his approval. He even overlooked and controlled the work in the course of its execution, and he was never so well pleased as when he detected some mistake his architects had made. The architects, being cognizant of this vanity, were sufficiently accomplished courtiers to make mistakes, from time to time, that were very apparent. The king would exult in detecting them, while they would contend that the measure had been taken very exactly, and that his majesty was in error. Then the measure would be taken again, the king arming himself with a yard-stick, square, and level. The error would be quickly demonstrated, when all would go into ecstasies over the correctness of the *coup d'œil* of his majesty, proclaim him a master of their art, and humbly demand his advice. This little comedy always succeeded.

The arrangement (at once noble, elegant, and simple) of the gardens soon began to be apparent, but twenty years elapsed before all was finished; because, in the first place, it often happened that when a thing was nearly completed the king would suddenly discover it was not to his taste, although he had approved of it at first, and all would have to be done over on a modified plan; and, again, because, as we shall see, Versailles could not be complete without an abundance of water, which was supplied by immense labor and at great cost. The gardens of Versailles, indeed, were not finished under Louis XIV. A large part of them were replanted under Louis XV., a century after the death of Le Nôtre, when the decoration of the basins was completed, particularly that of the *Bassin de Neptune*, which, under Louis XIV., was wholly destitute of ornament, the water-jets coming from simple leaden pipes.

A complete representation of Versailles, under Louis XIV., is found in the fifty cuts designed and engraved under the direction of Lepautre, and published in 1714 and 1715, entitled "*Plans, profils et élévations des ville et châteaux de Versailles, avec des Bosquets et Fontaines, tels qu'ils sont à présent.*" This work will serve us as a guide in the rapid description of the ornaments most worthy of notice.

At first, let us place ourselves before the steps of the chateau, between the two basins of the *Parterre d'Eau*. We have before us a magnificent view; the balusters bordered with yew-trees, and the flight of steps that descend to the central parterre; then

the royal alley, with its extended verdant lawn, and farther on Apollo's basin, while as far as the eye can reach, the canal.

In the semicircle, formed by the hedge of yoke-elm, which entirely conceals the walls of the balusters and stairs, we have Latona's basin. The sculptor, Marsey, has represented the mother of Apollo and Diana at the moment when, pursued by the hatred of Juno, she sees herself exposed to the insults of the Lycian peasants, whom Jupiter, in his anger, transforms into frogs. Latona and her two children are in marble; the peasants, the frogs, and the beings half human and half batrachian, which surround the goddess, form sixty figures in bronzed lead, each one vomiting a jet of water. There are two other jets rising perpendicularly on the sides of the basin.

Let us go forward, without stopping at the lizard's basins, which ornament the two compartments of the central parterre, to the basin of Apollo, the companion to the basin of Latona. It is one hundred and twenty yards long, and ninety yards wide. Its design is extremely elegant. Between two jets of water, which rise to the height of forty-seven feet, we perceive with difficulty in the midst of a large jet, that rises fifty-seven feet, the god of day holding the reins of his chariot, and rising from the water to begin his daily course. The horses, although half submerged, are more easily distinguished. Dolphins and tritons, vomiting jets of water, accompany Phœbus to the limits of the liquid realm. All these figures are in lead, after designs by Le Brun. The heathen divinities are nearly all represented at Versailles. No one of any note is wanting, except the greatest of them all, the father of men and the gods. This would be a subject of surprise, if we did not remember that the master of this Olympus, he whose power made the world tremble, was seated in the chateau on a throne of velvet fringed with gold, under a dias of *fleurs de lis*.

Neptune was also long absent, as we have said, from the vast basin or amphitheatre consecrated to him, and which is beyond question the *chef-d'œuvre* of the garden. The figures with which it is now ornamented are by Bouchardon, 1739, Sigisbert Adam, 1740, and Lemoine, 1740. The principal group is placed, not in the centre, but on one side, and represents the god of the ocean and his wife Amphitrite sitting in an immense sea-shell. Neptune is armed with his trident, partially clothed with the spoils of a monster, from the jaws of which issues a stream of water. At his right there is a triton mounted on a sea-horse. Amphitrite has near her a triton and a seal, while a naiad presents her with the treasures of the ocean. On the right of this august couple sport the animals confided to the care of Proteus, the faithful servant of Neptune. On the left there is a gigantic unicorn, surrounded by an urn, a forest of reeds, and two fantastic fish. The tablet that surmounts the upper portion of the basin is ornamented with twenty-two vases of exquisite workmanship.

We reach the *Bassin de Neptune* by the *Allée d'Eau*, called also *Allée des Marmousets*, because it is ornamented with a double row of seven little marble basins, in the centre of which are groups of children supporting diminutive basins, also in marble. The children are in bronze. Eight other groups border the half moon, that faces the *Bassin de Neptune* and encircles the piece of sculpture known as the Dragon. This dragon is the famous serpent of Python, that Apollo pierced with his armor. A jet of water comes from its jaws, as from the jaws of all the monsters of the garden.

This alley leads us to the grand terrace, where we pause to view the two basins at the north and the south. The former, particularly, is beautiful in the extreme. The nymphs, groups of children, and symbolic figures that decorate this basin, form an *ensemble* full of harmony. At the southern extremity of the terrace two magnificent flights of stairs, of one hundred and three steps each, descend to the parterre of the grand orangery. This orangery, constructed in 1685, on the site of that of Louis XIII., is considered the *chef-d'œuvre* of Mansard. It is divided into three galleries, and in extent is absolutely vast. The mid-

dle gallery is one hundred and fifty-five yards long, thirteen yards wide, and about thirteen yards high. The side galleries are one hundred and fifteen yards long. In the principal gallery there is a colossal statue of Louis XIV., in marble, by Desjardins. This statue has a history. The Revolution cut off its head and substituted another, that made it represent the god Mars. Mars, in his turn, was decapitated by the Restoration, and the primitive monarch gained a new head.

The orangery was finished in 1686, when the orange-trees at Fontainebleau were immediately transferred to it. One of these trees is the subject of an historic legend. A princess of Navarre, in 1421, planted five orange-seeds so close together, that when they came up three of the plants grew into one tree. In 1499, Catherine de Foix, Queen of Navarre, sent this tree to Queen Anne of Brittany. In course of time it found its way to Fontainebleau, where it was catalogued under the name of the *Connétable*. At Versailles it is known as the *Grand Bourbon*. If its history be true, this venerable orange-tree is over four and a half centuries old.

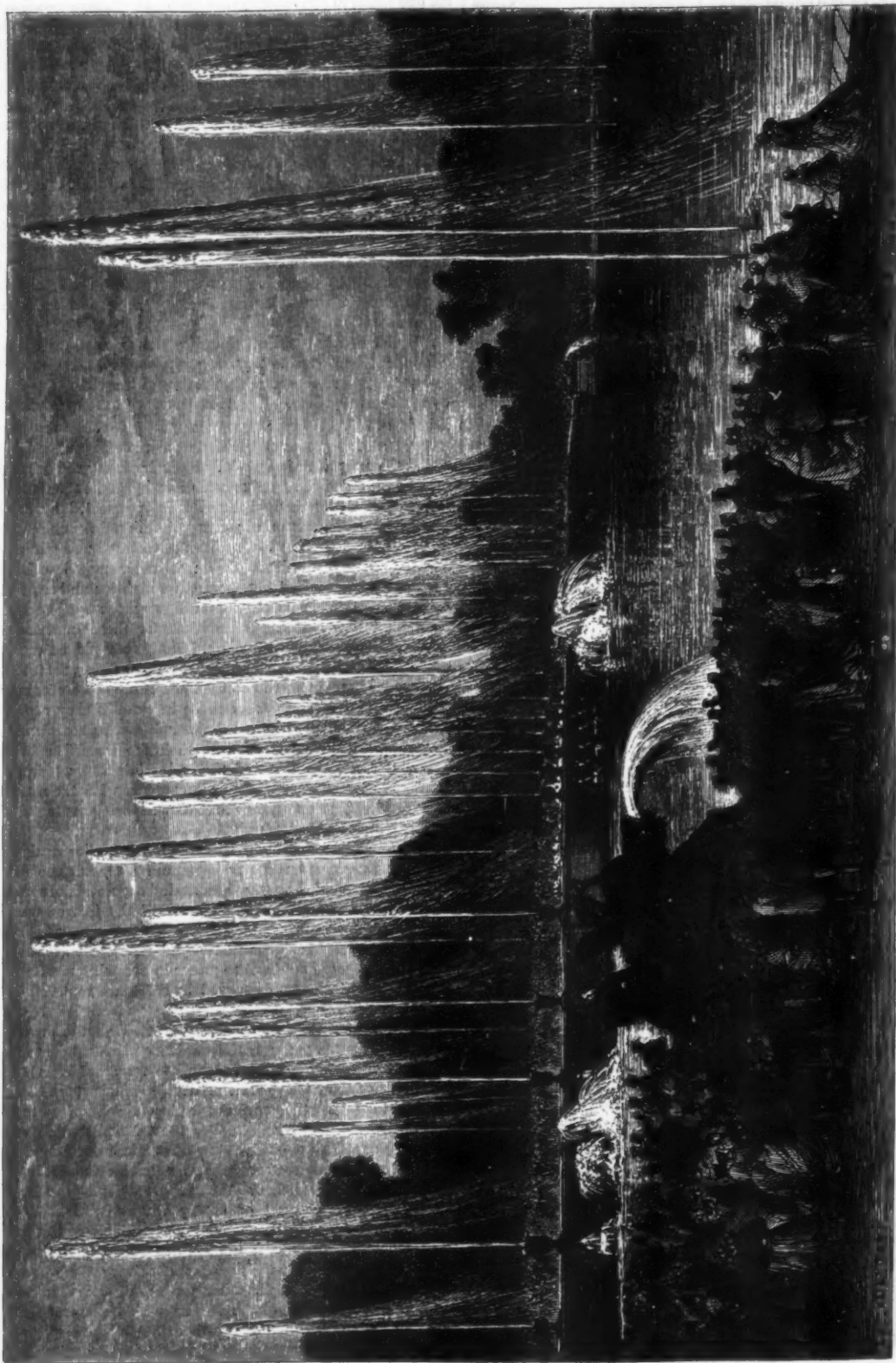
We have only to follow the alley that runs along the west side of the parterre of the orangery, to reach the site of the most curious and characteristic feature of the old park of Versailles, the Labyrinth. The description we have of it was published in 1722. It says:

"Of all the groves of the little park of Versailles, the one called the Labyrinth is especially remarkable for the originality of its design and the number and diversity of its fountains. It is called the Labyrinth, because it is intersected by a great number of paths running in every direction, in such a manner as to render it almost impossible not to lose one's self among them; but, in order that the promenader may lose himself agreeably, there is not a point from which a number of fountains are not visible, so that at every step the eye is delighted with some new object. The subjects for these fountains were chosen from the fables of Æsop. Nothing could be more ingenious than the manner in which they have been represented. The animals are in metal, colored according to nature, and are so well executed as to seem to be in the act they represent, while the jets of water they throw imitates, in some measure, the words the fable has put into their mouths. The brilliant colors of the rare shells, and the rock-work with which all the basins are ornamented, contrast so happily with the surrounding verdure, that one never tires of wandering among this immense number of fountains."

It would be superfluous to caution the reader against the manifest exaggeration of our ingenious author. The painted animals that figured on these fountains were certainly very far from appearing to be alive, in spite of the jets of water in which our author's imagination saw the language of the fable represented. It is evident that, at the time of Louis XIV., the connoisseurs were not hard to please in animal figures.

The Labyrinth was destroyed in 1775, and replaced by the *Bosquet de la Reine*.

We have not the space to pass in review all the groves and basins distributed through the garden. We must content ourselves with citing some of the more remarkable. Of these were: the *Salle de Bal*, which still exists, and where there is a beautiful cascade; the grove of the *Arc-de-Triomphe*, destroyed in 1801, which contained, besides the triumphal arch erected in honor of the king, obelisks in rock-work, a number of vases, statues, and cascades of marvellous richness; the grove of the *Montagne d'Eau*, called also the *Bosquet de la Pyramide* or *de l'Obélisque*, on account of the enormous column of water, formed by one hundred and thirty jets, which rose in the basin to the height of fifty feet; the *Théâtre d'Eau*, one of the *chef-d'œuvres* of Le Nôtre; the *Bassin d'Enclade*; the grove of the Three Fountains, remarkable for the art displayed in its ornamentation; the grove of the Domes, which encloses two little marble temples, surmounted with domes enriched with metal ornaments; the grove of the Colonnade, in the centre of which



BASIN OF NEPTUNE, VERSAILLES.

BASIN OF NEPTUNE, VERSAILLES.



SCHÖNBRUNN, VIENNA.

is the beautiful group by Girardon; the abduction of Proserpine, and finally the *Bosquet du Rocher*, or the *Bains d'Apollon*.

The colonnade is by Mansard, and was constructed during the absence of Le Nôtre in Italy. After his return the king asked his opinion of it. Le Nôtre was silent; the king insisted. Finally, he cried, in the brusque manner peculiar to him: "Eh, sire! what can I say? You have chosen a mason for your gardener, and he has given you a specimen of his art." This specimen, it must be admitted, is by no means a bad one.

In the spring of 1664, Louis XIV. dedicated his new residence at Versailles by magnificent festivities. For three days amusements of every description followed one another without interruption. It was on the third day that Molière represented, for the first time, his comedy entitled *La Princesse d'Élide*. What was the king's motive in giving this fête? Was it a simple house-warming? The courtiers knew that this was only the pretext. And for whom, then, did he go to such expense, if it was not for her, who, at that time, was the idol of his heart, the lovely Louise de la Vallière?

Louis at this time was of an age when such follies are, perhaps, in a measure pardonable. He was only twenty-six.

Among the *bosquets* (groves) newly created by Le Nôtre, and which, during these three days attracted the guests, none was more admired than that of the *Grotte de Thétis*, situated quite near the chateau. Here were three beautiful groups by the sculptors Girardon, Guérin, and Marsy, representing Apollo preparing to quit the home of the goddess of the seas to go and enlighten the world. While the nymphs pour a stream of pure water on his feet and hands, and perfume his blonde locks, the tritons get his coursers ready.

The *Grotte de Thétis* was long the favorite retreat of Louis XIV. There he led, after the gentle Vallière, the ingenious Fontanges, then the imperious Montespan. After Madame de Montespan, like her predecessors, had been deserted, and Louis had married, at the age of forty-seven, the widow Scarron, Madame de Maintenon, who was fifty-two, the grotto was condemned to disappear, and on its site the chapel of the chateau was erected. The three marble groups were removed at first, in 1699, to the *Bosquet des Dômes*; then, in 1704, to the grove of the *Chêne-Vert*.

In 1775, under Louis XV., when the garden was replanted, the architect Robert designed the new *Grotte de Thétis*, as it exists at present. If Le Nôtre could return to earth, he would be disgusted with its appearance, for it is not only the work of another man, but of another epoch, when imitations of nature were made to replace the conceptions purely artistic of the preceding century.

It only remains for us to glance at the *Grand Parc*, or rather at the only two notable things it contains—the canal, and the piece of water called *des Suisses*. Beyond the Bath of Apollo we have the great basin, one hundred and forty yards in diameter, which forms the head of the canal, fifteen hundred and fifty yards long, terminating at another basin of still greater dimensions than the first. Two secondary branches start from a third basin, situated near the middle of the canal. The one on the left ends at the menagerie, which was suppressed in 1793, the other extends to the north, as far as the old village de Trianon, where, at first, the *Palais de Flore* was built, and soon afterward the chateau called Trianon. At the time of Louis XIV., there was a little fleet of gondolas on the canal, manned, in part, by Venetians, who inhabited a little village called Little Venice, built expressly for them in the Grand Parc.

The piece of water called *des Suisses*, named thus because a regiment of Swiss guards were employed in making the excavations for it, is situated at the entrance of the Grand Parc, in front of the parterre of the orangery. This piece of water is four hundred yards long, and one hundred and forty yards wide. The stones with which it was curbed have been destroyed. It is consequently no longer a basin, properly, but a sort of pond with muddy edges, strewn here and there with

the bodies of drowned animals, making the aspect any thing but agreeable. On the southern glacis, at the foot of the wooded hillock of Sartory, stands an equestrian statue in marble. The common people call it the *Cavalier Bernin*, because it is by the Italian sculptor Bernini. This "cavalier" was intended to represent Louis XIV. in Roman costume, but the artist does not seem to have been very successful, and Girardon, who was employed to retouch it, transformed the great and victorious Louis into a Marcus Curtius, who throws himself into a gulf to save his country. The idea is a strange one, and the representation, at best, only mediocre.

The earth, or rather the sand produced in making the excavations for the piece of water called *des Suisses*, was used to fill up a pond that was situated a little farther to the west, and formed a large part of the site selected by Mansard for the royal vegetable garden. La Quintinie, who was charged with the making of this garden, tells us, in his "*Instruction pour les Jardins fruitiers et potagers*," of the difficulties he had to overcome. The cost of this garden was estimated at 1,800,000 livres. It was begun in 1678, and finished in the autumn of 1683. The fruits of the warm climates, such as figs, pine-apples, etc., were cultivated here with considerable success. Louis XV. was very fond of coffee, which he was in the habit of frequently preparing himself. To please his majesty, Lenormand cultivated a dozen coffee-trees in the hot-houses of the vegetable-garden. They grew to the height of twelve feet, and yielded five or six pounds of coffee yearly. This the king would roast, and, after preparing the infusion, offer it to his courtiers, who, however, could not discover that it was better than the coffee of the colonies.

During the Revolution a portion of the vegetable-garden was given to the Agricultural Society, and the remainder was transformed into a botanic garden for the instruction of the pupils of the Central School of the department.

Under Napoleon I. it became a dependence of Versailles. In 1848, the Government annexed it to the Institute of the Agricultural Society, which was suppressed in 1852, when the garden again became the domain of the crown.

II.

The capital of Austria, Vienna, presents a somewhat singular appearance. It is the type of a *parvenu* city, showing in its present grandeur unmistakable evidences of its humble origin. Its primitive nucleus, the *Innere Stadt*, is a little village composed of narrow, entangled streets, encircled by ramparts and a broad glacis. Beyond extend vast suburbs, so called, one of which, *Mariahilf*, spreads itself out a long distance to the southwest. There, as in Paris, the suburbs (*faubourgs*) have become the real city. The bastions of the *Innere Stadt* form terraces planted with trees, which offer many fine views of the glacis and suburbs. The glacis themselves, about five hundred yards wide, traversed by walks and drives, planted with lime, plane, and chestnut trees, and acacias, sown with grass and bordered by handsome edifices, form a beautiful promenade. Within the limits of the *Innere Stadt*, at its southwest extremity, the *Volks-garten* (garden of the people) is situated. It was founded in 1824 by the Emperor Francis. In the centre of this garden stands a temple, which is an exact copy of the Temple of Theseus at Athens, in which stands the beautiful group by Canova, *Theseus contending with the Minotaur*. Belvedere Palace, the gardens of which are in the style of those of Versailles, is situated on the *Landstrasse* (literally, country road), at the east of the city. But it is to the north and northeast that we find the gardens of which the people of Vienna are especially proud, the *Auegarten* and the *Prater*. The *Auegarten* is a handsome but somewhat monotonous garden, planted on an island of the Danube. It was opened to the public in 1775, by the philosophic emperor, Joseph II., who had an inscription placed over the gate, the sense of which is, *Place of recreation consecrated to all men by their appreciator*.

It would seem that "all men" are not very sensible of this delicate attention of Joseph II., for Augarten is little frequented. The Viennese prefer the Prater, and they are right. "There is nowhere to be found," says Madame de Staël, "so near a large capital"—she wrote, it will be remembered, at the beginning of this century—"a promenade that presents at once the rustic beauties of nature and charms of art. A majestic forest extends as far as the banks of the Danube. Herds of deer are seen in the distance on the prairies; they return in the morning and betake themselves to the distant parts of the park in the evening, when the promenaders disturb their solitude. The spectacle that is seen only three times in the year at Paris, on Longchamps days, may here be witnessed daily during the warm season. It is certainly a beautiful sight to see the citizens of Vienna gathered together under the shade of these magnificent forest-trees, on the broad lawns that the Danube keeps perpetually green." The Prater is much less frequented than it was before the railroads offered such facilities for getting to the surrounding country.

Two grand imperial residences, Schoenbrunn and Lachsenburg, principally attract those promenaders who do not prefer simple nature to the creations of art. Schoenbrunn is the Versailles of Leopold I. and Maria Theresa. The architects of the great empress seem to have undertaken, in the decoration of Schoenbrunn, to surpass the luxurious expenditure of the architects of Louis XIV. in decorating Versailles. There are statues enough here to satisfy even the most ardent lover of the sculptor's art. The profusion of ornament renders the contrast between the grounds and the yellow walls and green blinds of the chateau all the more unpleasing. The chateau looks more like a public house than an imperial residence.

The park of Lachsenburg was designed under the reign of Maria Theresa, in the picturesque style that was then *en vogue*. It is watered by several streams, irregular in their course, and contains a large lake dotted with a number of small islands covered with verdure and flowers. The chief objects of interest at Lachsenburg are: the gold-fish basin and its elegant pavilion; the natural cascade; the *Franzensburg*, a fortress in the style of the middle ages, which has been converted into an immense museum of antiquities; the temple of Concord; the temple of Diana; the little Prater, etc.

Munich possesses, besides the *Hofgarten*, celebrated for its arcades, a magnificent English park, called the *Englischer Garten*, about two and a half miles long and one and a quarter wide. Near the close of the last century it was a swamp. In 1790, Count Rumford made a beginning toward converting it into a garden. Skell continued the work under the reign of Maximilian-Joseph I. This park is watered by several branches of the Isar.

Prague, so rich in monuments and historic souvenirs, possesses, as becomes a capital fallen from its ancient position, but not from its antique nobility, several gardens worthy of notice. Those of the palace of Wallenstein, a residence more than royal, built by the renowned captain on the site of twenty houses that were bought and razed by his orders, are not open to the public except on Sundays and fête-days; but the *Volks-garten*, originated in 1833, by the Burggraf Collotok, and the *Kaisergarten*, are always open to the people. The *Kaisergarten* was planted by Ferdinand I. Here is the Belvedere that this prince built for his wife Anna, and which served later as an observatory. Beyond the city limits there are other gardens more rural in their character, that offer to the promenader well-shaded walks and picturesque sites. The most notable of these is the *Baumgarten*, where, thanks to an intelligent if not disinterested foresight, one may spend the day without suffering from either hunger or thirst.

Let us transport ourselves in imagination from Prague to Saint Petersburg, but we must choose well our time and not arrive there before the month of May or June; that is, at the period of the year when Nature for a few months divests herself

of her mantle of snow, and robes herself in verdure. It is then only that the aspect of Saint Petersburg is at all pleasing. Earlier in the season, every one tries to make himself as comfortable as possible in-doors; later, the wealthier classes quit the city for the country. In the spring, the streets, the quays, and promenades are filled by crowds, who are happy to see once more the blue sky, to be warmed by the genial rays of the sun, and to breathe a milder atmosphere. The Summer Garden opens its gates. Let us enter, or rather let us at first glance at the celebrated iron fence that separates the garden from the quay of the Neva. This fence dates from the reign of Catharine II. It is interrupted at regular distances by thirty-six columns of solid, polished granite, resting on pedestals of the same stone, and surmounted by vases with gilt handles. The alley for equestrians, that runs round the four sides of the park, is much frequented by the gentlemen and ladies of the higher classes, while the two broad promenades, bordered with lime-trees, that traverse the entire length of the garden, are filled by motley crowds of pedestrians. But, animated as this spectacle is, it is nothing compared with what was formerly to be witnessed here on Whit-Sunday, when, according to a custom now no longer observed, the merchants repaired thither to select their *fiancées*. Beyond the city limits, at a short distance from Tsarkoë-Selo, stands the chateau of Paulovski, whose park is dressed with the greatest care. "Nature gave to Paulovski," says a German writer, "an undulating surface, sloping declivities, and picturesque valleys watered by a limpid stream. It was only necessary to plant here and there a group of trees, to open an occasional glade and trace a few promenades, to make Paulovski one of the most delightful resorts about Saint Petersburg." On an elevation in the centre of the park, there is a pavilion where every evening during the summer a regimental band plays for the edification of the promenaders. "One sits under the branches of the lilacs, or strolls about in the alleys, now chatting with one's companion and now listening to the songs of Mozart or the melodies of Rossini."

III.

The invention of conservatories was the perfection of horticulture. Without these enclosed gardens, with their transparent walls and roof, we should be compelled to restrict ourselves to the cultivation of the plants peculiar to our own climate, or at most to those climates differing but slightly from our own. The plants of warmer countries would be known to us only by the descriptions and paintings of travellers, or by the dry and mutilated specimens of the botanists.

The first conservatories worthy of the name do not date beyond the fifteenth century. These were orangeries, in which, during the winter, orange-trees, laurels, myrtles, etc., were protected from the severity of the weather.

As late as the end of the seventeenth century, there were very few conservatories in France. Louis XIV. built none, either at Versailles or Marly. Sebastian Vaillant constructed, in 1703, the first two hot-houses there were in the royal gardens.

About the beginning of this century the taste for conservatories became much more general in all the countries of Europe, especially in England and Germany. In Russia, also, they began to construct conservatories, not only in their botanical gardens, but also as an appendage to the imperial and private residences.

In France, the finest conservatories are undoubtedly those of the *Jardin des Plantes*. They unite in the highest degree elegance of construction and perfect adaptability to the requirements of a hot-house. In them are found all the choicest plants of the warm climates of both hemispheres. Many of the specimens are of rare beauty, and seem to thrive as well as in their native soil. The accompanying view of the grand conservatory of the Garden of Plants at Paris gives as correct an idea, perhaps, of the appearance of the interior of these enclosed gardens as the artist's pencil can present.



GARDEN OF PLANTS, PARIS.

